

CAMPTOPELTA, A NEW GENUS OF STRATIOMYIDÆ.

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During a vacation the past season in New Mexico I found relief from monotony and much pleasure in renewing my acquaintance with the Diptera, a study to which I have given many years of my life, but which, perforce, has been interrupted during the past eight years. During the months of April and May I collected, almost daily, in the vicinity of Socorro for my friend, Dr. Aldrich. The collecting region was, for the most part, on the mesa near the foot of Mt. Socorro, and occasionally along the "bosque" of the Rio Grande. The mesa is a dry upland plain, with an altitude of about five thousand feet, covered with mesquite, with numerous dry arroyas traversing it and leading into the mountains. As would be suspected, its dipterous fauna consists chiefly of bombyliids and asilids, with some dexiids and mydaiids. Of the first of these families I collected nearly forty species, and saw others that I did not have the opportunity to capture. Syrphids, empids and dolycopodids were few in number, as were the nematoceros flies, with the exception of the Culicidæ, which, after the summer rains, occur in extraordinary numbers. Most of my specimens came from the dry arroyas, very few indeed from the level plains.

The only stratiomyid I saw during the season was a single specimen of a small species that I referred in the field to an unknown genus. I searched for it afterward without success. Rather curiously I took at the same time and place two specimens of *Epacmus willistoni* O. S. that I never saw afterward.

On a recent visit to Dr. Aldrich at La Fayette, my interest in the stratiomyid was renewed. I can find no account of it in recent literature, and venture to describe it as having some features of peculiar interest.

Camptopelta, genus new.

Female. Bare. Front smooth, broad, convex, not narrowed above. Ocelli equidistant. Antennæ situated below middle of head, short. First two joints short, the second broader than long; third joint (flagellum) oval, composed of six segments; first segment longest, a little

shorter than the next two together; fourth segment tapering to the slender style; style slender, about as long as the third and fourth segments together; fifth, or basal segment of style, minute, about as broad as long; sixth segment three or four times as long as the fifth, tapering to an obtuse point and ending in a short, slender hair. Face below the antennæ a little shorter than the first six segments of the antennæ combined; nearly straight, directed downward and forward, somewhat compressed at tip from side to side. Cheeks and posterior orbits of nearly equal width, only moderately broad. Eyes bare, subcircular. Scutellum strongly convex, somewhat thinned, but not furrowed before its margin; unarmed. Abdomen smooth, convex, tapering from the broad second segment; fourth segment but little more than twice as broad as long; seventh segment minutely visible at the end of the ovipositor. Wings with veins complete; four posterior veins, the fourth separated from discal cell by a distinct crossvein; the second vein arises about opposite the proximal end of the discal cell, and a little before the short anterior cross-vein; no anterior branch to the third vein; anal cell rather broad, terminating some distance before the wing margin, the sixth vein convex. Legs simple.

Camptopelta aldrichi, species new.

Female. Shining black, bare. A large, light yellow spot on each side of the front below, narrowly separated, their upper borders in the same straight line, extending down along the orbits to about the middle of the face, convex on their inner sides. Antennæ black. Cheeks black below the eyes. Orbits on the inferior half light yellow. A light yellow stripe from the humeri to the root of the wings. The narrow lateral margin of the first three abdominal segments yellow. Legs yellow, the femora broadly black; knees and tarsi light yellow, the tibiæ in the middle more luteous or brownish. Wings pure hyaline, the veins light-colored. Length 4-5 mm.

One specimen, near Mt. Socorro, New Mexico.

The position of the genus is a little doubtful. The minute seventh segment of the abdomen, together with the scutellum and neurulation will at once separate the form from the *Beridinae*. From the known *Pachygastrinae* (not *Pachygasterinae*, as Enderlein and Malloch spell it—gasteric, gasteritis!) it differs in the neurulation; from the *Clitellarinae* by the origin of the fourth posterior vein; from the *Geosarginae* by the absence of a distinct arista. Upon the whole its position seems to be among the *Stratiomyinae*, some forms of which, at least, have the second vein arising before the cross vein. From the known American genera it will be distinguished by the unarmed scutellum and the absence of the branch of the third vein.

However, it is a question how much reliance can be placed in this family upon the absence of this branch. This vein is disappearing in this family, and it is a well known fact that disappearing organs are more or less inconstant in the individual, just as the wisdom teeth often are not erupted in the human individual. In *Odontomyia*, *Oxycera*, and other genera of the family its presence or absence is disregarded as a generic or even specific character; I am very skeptical of any genus that is based upon its absence exclusively, and that seems to be the condition in some of the more recently described genera of the Pachygastrinæ. So also, the origin of the fourth vein is not absolutely fixed in all genera.

In the latter part of May I found a species of *Geron* (Bombyliidæ) very abundant on several kinds of flowers in the canons of Mt. Socorro, and a little ways out on the plains. I could have collected hundreds of specimens had I chosen. I did capture enough, however, to show that about one in every twenty had a perfectly formed third submarginal cell. I could discover no other constant differences. Whence it follows that, in the definition of this and some other genera of the Bombyliidæ, as in several genera of the Stratiomyidæ, the number of submarginal cells does not have even a specific value. This species of *Geron* is a "sport" or "mutation" that has not yet been fixed by heredity, a developing character, apparently. *Rhabdopselaphus* Bigot was based upon a difference of the third antennal joint (*Geron trochilides* W. probably belongs with it) and with "submarginalibus tribus" cells. One of its type specimens in Mr. Verrall's cabinet has but two submarginal cells, but it is not at all sure that this genus also is not variable, and that Bigot made a mistake in his description.

Mr. Malloch, though he has never seen a specimen of *Lophoteles*, has expressed a doubt of the correctness of my generic determination of *L. pallidipennis* W.* Perhaps it is presumption on my part, in view of Mr. Malloch's knowledge of the family, to adhere to my opinion. Indeed, I long had a suspicion that not only was my species congeneric with Loew's type but that both species were identical! And this suspicion has been increased by Enderlein's discovery† of *L. plumula* Loew in Costa Rica! About the only difference he finds

*Annals Ent. Soc. Amr. 1915, p. 335.

†Zool. Anz. 1914, p. 311.

between the two is the lighter color of the knees. I may add that the figures made by v. d. Wulp for the *Biologia*, although himself an eminent dipterist, were not always strictly accurate in details, and it may be the differences Enderlein points out do not really exist, and that *L. pallidipennis* Williston is in reality a synonym of *L. plumula* Loew. I fear that Mr. Malloch overlooked Enderlein's paper, or he would also have discovered that his genus *Eucynipimorpha* is a synonym of *Psephiocera* Enderlein.